



ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

SPONSORED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

GOALS:

The main goal of this program is to expose entrepreneurs, small business owners, private sector development specialists and business educators from the MENA region to best practices in innovation and small business growth in the United States. Participants will increase their understanding of the links between entrepreneurial activity and free markets, as well as the importance of transparency and accountability in business and government through first-hand experience in American small businesses and entrepreneurship support organizations. The main objectives of the program are the following:

- 1) To provide participants from eligible countries an opportunity to gain knowledge of U.S. practices and techniques in their field of expertise, explore governance principles and practices in both public and civil society institutions in the United States, and gain a deeper understanding of U.S. society, culture, and people.
- 2) To provide U.S. participants the opportunity to share their professional expertise with counterparts in eligible countries and gain a deeper understanding of the societies, cultures, and people of the participating countries;
- 3) To promote mutual understanding and lasting, mutually beneficial partnerships.

OVERVIEW:

The main elements of the program include:

- A four (4) week fellowship which will provide a comprehensive set of strategies to promote youth entrepreneurship, primarily in high technology fields, in the MENA region. Fellows will participate in professional development and team building workshops. Topics may include the following: branding and marketing products; business plan writing; programs to promote entrepreneurship in high schools and universities; the protection of intellectual property; and financing entrepreneurial ventures. The fellowship placements will be mostly in small local businesses and in entrepreneurship support organizations
- Two sessions (April/May and October/November 2013)
- Three - four participants from each country in each session (a total of 16 per session).
- Three weeks will be in Ann Arbor/Dearborn/Detroit, Michigan and one week will take place in Washington D.C.
- Participants will be required to develop and present an action plan on how to apply their experiences to their own organization and home country.

- A follow-up event will be held in the MENA region after each session (total of 2) to promote mutual understanding and expand the partnerships. Two groups of eight to twelve American participants will subsequently travel to the MENA region to observe participants in their home work environment, share their expertise with the MENA fellows that they hosted in Michigan, participate in workshops and provide consulting advice to local organizations, thus sustaining the network created.

APPLICANTS: The program will focus specifically on young men and women who are entrepreneurs, small business owners, work for entrepreneurship support organizations, either state run or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or teach entrepreneurship at either the high school or university level. To be eligible to participate in this program, you must be:

- Fluent in English
- From one of the following eligible countries: *Egypt, Libya, Israel/Palestinian Authority, and Tunisia*
- Entrepreneurs or those directly involved in promoting entrepreneurship among young people.

EXPENSES PAID: The University of Michigan will pay for participant travel, food, lodging and local transportation

LOCATION: Ann Arbor, Michigan (3 weeks) – participants will be lodged in a local hotel
 UM campus (1 day a week) – professional development training
 Local industry/Organizations (4 days a week) – fellowship placements
 Dearborn/Detroit/Ann Arbor community (evenings/weekends) – networking with business leaders, cultural events
 Washington D.C. (1 week) – Department of State Professional Fellows Conference, Professional development and cultural events

TIMING:

<i>Applications Due:</i>	January 10, 2013
<i>Notification of Acceptance:</i>	By February 15, 2013
<i>Program Dates:</i>	Session 1: April/May 2013 (4 weeks)
	Session 2: October/November 2013 (4 weeks)
<i>In-Region Follow Up Events:</i>	January/February 2014
	May/June 2014

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